

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

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TAGS: MT, SCUL, OEXC

SUBJECT: IVP NOMINEE PHILIP MUSCAT

1. MALTESE MINISTER OF EDUCATION DR. PHILIP MUSCAT, WHO WAS INVITED ON INTERNATIONAL VISITOR PROGRAM BY AMBASSADOR ON MAY 24, HAS ASKED EMBASSY FOR GREATER DETAIL ON WHAT HE MIGHT ACCOMPLISH PROFESSIONALLY WHILE IN THE UNITED STATES. MUSCAT IS APPARENTLY ANXIOUS TO BE ABLE TO PRESENT HIS TRIP AS SERIOUSLY PROFESSIONAL AND VALUABLE TO MALTA IN A PRACTICAL SENSE WHEN HE APPROACHES PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF FOR PERMISSION TO ACCEPT OUR INVITATION.

2. EMBASSY WOULD, THEREFORE, APPRECIATE RECEIVING A LIST OF INSTITUTIONS THAT MUSCAT MIGHT VISIT, ALONG WITH A SENTENCE OR TWO ON EACH TELLING HOW A VISIT TO THIS INSTITUTION COULD BE USEFUL TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND TO MALTA.

3. MUSCAT HAS BEEN MINISTER OF EDUCATION SINCE DECEMBER 1976 AND IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

A. WORK/STUDY, OR EARN AS YOU LEARN PROGRAMS AT

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UPPER SECONDARY AND COLLEGE LEVEL;

B. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS;

C. HOW A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY COMMITTED TO UNIVERSAL EDUCATION COPES WITH THE PROBLEMS OF ASSURING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY;

D. EDUCATION IN MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL;

E. TEACHER TRAINING;

F. EDUCATION FOR MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN;

G. MEDICAL TRAINING (MUSCAT IS A PHYSICIAN BY PROFESSION).

4. THOUGH MUSCAT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO TRAVEL DURING PARLIAMENT'S AUGUST RECESS, A TIME WHEN MOST SCHOOLS IN THE US ARE CLOSED, HE WOULD FIND OBSERVATION AND CONSULTATION AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS MORE VALUABLE THAN THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS AT OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS. THIS IS NOT TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH ASSOCIATIONS SHOULD BE EXCLUDED.

5. MUSCAT IS ALSO INTERESTED IN MARINE BIOLOGY AND IN OCEANOGRAPHY, PARTICULARLY MATTERS AFFECTING MALTA'S CHANCES OF BECOMING THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY.

6. HE WOULD LIKE TO VISIT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK, CHICAGO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OR DETROIT AND SAN FRANCISCO OR LOS ANGELES, BUT IS COMPLETELY OPEN TO SUGGESTION. IT WOULD PROBABLY BE WORTHWHILE TO INCLUDE A VISIT TO LUTHER COLLEGE IN DECORAH, IOWA, AS THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA HAS HAD A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH LUTHER FOR SEVERAL YEARS. WE HAVE TOLD HIM THAT THE TRIP SHOULD BE EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTS IT TO BE, BUT HE DOES NOT KNOW JUST WHAT TO ASK FOR.

7. SINCE MUSCAT IS NEW TO HIS RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND SINCE HE REALIZES HE HAS MUCH TO LEARN, HE WANTS THIS TRIP TO BE ABOVE ALL A SERIOUS LEARNING EXPERIENCE. MOREOVER, ONLY SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD WIN THE NECESSARY APPROVAL FROM MINTOFF, WHO WOULD SEE A VISIT DESCRIBED VAGUELY AS "OBSERVATION AND CONSULTATION" AS A JUNKET.

8. THE EMBASSY REALIZES THIS REQUEST IS CONTRARY TO USUAL PROCEDURE, BUT WE ARE ANXIOUS TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO INSURE THAT THIS YEAR'S LABOR PARTY NOMINEES RECEIVE THE NECESSARY PERMISSION FROM MINTOFF AND WOULD, THEREFORE, APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S SUPPLYING THE REQUESTED INFORMATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, HOPEFULLY BY COB JUNE 27.

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